

The Mecklenburg Declaration. May 20, 1775. [8 stanzas of verse] May 20th, 1875.

THE MECKLENBURG DECLARATION, MAY 20, 1775.

Oppressed and few, but freemen yet, The men of Mecklenburg had met, Determined to be free, And
crook no coward knee, Though Might in front and Treason at their back Brought death and ruin in
their joint attack.

The Tyrant's heel was on the land When Polk convoked his gallant band, And told in words full strong
The bitter tale of wrong. Then came a whisper, like the storm's first waves: "*We must be independent,
or be slaves!*"

But, hark! What hurried rider, this, With jaded horse and garb amiss, Whose look some woe
proclaims Ere he his mission names? He rides amain from far-off Lexington, And tells the blood-red
news of war begun!

Then Brevard, Balch and Kennon spoke The wise, bold words that aye invoke Men to defend
the right And scorn the Despot's might; Until from all there rose the answering cry: "*We will be
independent, or we die!*"

When Alexander called the vote, No dastard "nay's" discordant note Broke on that holy air— For
dastard none was there! But in prompt answer to their country's call, They pledged life, fortune,
sacred honor—all!

In solemn hush the people heard; With shout and cheer they caught the word: "Independence! In
that sign We grasp our right divine; For the Tyrant's might and the Traitor's hate Must yield to men
who fight for God and State!"

The hero shout flew on the breeze; Rushed from the mountains to the seas; Till all the land uprose,
Their faces to their foes, Shook off the thralldom they so long had borne, And swore the oath that
Mecklenburg had sworn!

And well those men maintained the right; They kept the faith and fought the fight; Till Might and
Treason, both, Fled fast before the oath Which brought the God of Freedom's battles down To place
on patriot brows the victor's crown!

May 20 th, 1875.